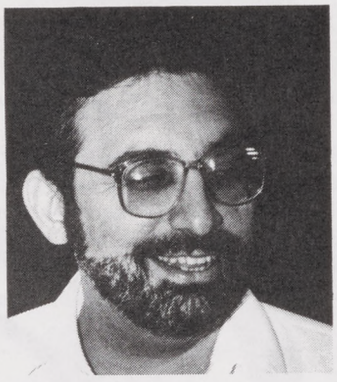
Keeping in Touch

News and notes from
the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches

July 1992

Rev. Arlene Ackerman



Mr. Adam DeBaugh

Mid-Atlantic District Elects Rev. Ackerman

Rev. Arlene Ackerman was elected Mid-Alantic District Coordinator at the Mid-Atlantic District Conference June 12-13 in Baltimore, MD.

Rev. Ackerman, who has served as a church growth and development consultant for the past eight months, was elected with 78 percent of the vote on the first ballot to a four-year term, effective July 1. More than 130 registrants attended the district conference.

Over the past 14 years, Rev. Ackerman has pastored small, medium and large churches in UFMCC. From 1985 to 1991, she served as pastor of All God's Children MCC in Minneapolis, MN, which grew from 90 to 375 members under her leadership.

Mr. Adam DeBaugh, who served as Mid-Atlantic District Coordinator since 1983, did not seek re-election. On July 1 he begins working full-time for Chi Rho Press, a lesbian and gay Christian publishing house that is a special work of the Mid-Atlantic District.

Looking back over his nearly nine years as district coordinator, Mr. DeBaugh noted that the district's annual budget grew from $10,000 to $52,900 and district membership increased from 500 to 1,100. In 1983 the district had only two churches with more than 50 members, now it has nine such churches.

"An important trend has been strengthening the existing churches and building discipleship. That's more important than the numbers," he said.

Other highlights in the district under Mr. DeBaugh's leadership include establishing special funds for student clergy scholarships, new works and clergy care; developing a partnership with Samaritan College; and creating Emmaus House of Prayer, Delores Berry Evangelistic Ministries and Chi Rho Press as special works. ❐

UFMCC Launches New Ecumenical Plan

UFMCC launched a new ecumenical strategy in May by requesting official observer status from the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC).

In addition, UFMCC plans to contact NCC member denominations directly to invite them to engage in dialogue.

In a May 26 letter, Rev. Elder Troy Perry, founder and moderator, asked the NCC to recognize UFMCC as an official observer, beginning with the NCC General Board meeting in November 1992 in Cleveland, OH.

"Our ultimate goal continues to be full membership in the NCC, but we are requesting observer status in order to acknowledge the limits imposed on our relationship by their homophobia," said Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, UFMCC chief ecumenical officer.

On May 19, the NCC Executive Coordinating Committee acted

(see Ecumenical Plans, page 6)

***"MCC was the first opportunity** I got to see a non-Indian world work from a tribal perspective, meaning a community perspective," says Ms. Juanita Majel, a Native American lay delegate from MCC East County in Spring Valley, CA. For more on Native American spirituality, see page 2.*

From The Editor

Subscriptions Offered

Subscriptions to *Keeping in Touch* are available free of charge upon request.

UFMCC churches and districts are especially urged to submit the names and addresses of lay delegates, district committee members, board members and any other church leaders who are interested in keeping informed about happenings throughout the Fellowship.

All subscription requests should be sent to: *Keeping in Touch*, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029. ❐

Italian Man Touched

As editor, I'm always fascinated by how *Keeping in Touch* is circulated. The following letter from a man in Torino, Italy, illustrates the broad impact that this newsletter and UFMCC as a whole are making around the globe.

▼ ▼ ▼

"I'm an Italian supporter of MCC and I'd like to receive your newsletter *Keeping in Touch*. Two years ago a pastor of the Episcopalian Church told me about the MCC and even if I'm not a believer, I found it very good. Last year he sent me your July 1991 newsletter and now I want to receive it regularly. Have you a MCC parish in France or in Switzerland? If yes, please let me know.

That's all for the moment, greetings for your good work on behalf of gay people and best wishes for the future." ❐

Native American Spirituality Offers Wisdom and Challenges

By Rev. Kittredge Cherry

Awareness of Native American spirituality is growing within UFMCC, and connections with Christianity are being explored. For example:

▼ Ms. Juanita Majel, a Native American lay delegate from MCC East County in Spring Valley, CA, conducted a Native American blessing before a sermon by Rev. Darlene Garner at General Conference in 1991. Ms. Majel has also incorporated Native American traditions as a guest preacher at MCC Los Angeles, CA.

▼ Ms. Gina Hartung, pastoral leader of Shepherd of the Plains MCC in Great Falls, MT, attends Native American ceremonies and sometimes brings Native American traditions into the church she pastors by wearing Native American-style vestments and using the smoke from sweet grass to bless people. She has "smudged" (blessed with smoke) Rev. Elders Jeri Ann Harvey and Freda Smith. She and Rick Reynolds coordinated two Native American dances and a "give-away" of Native American shawls, ear rings and belt buckles at Mid-Central District Conference, May 1992.

▼ Harvest MCC, Denton, TX, offered a four-part course on Native American spirituality in July 1991, followed by a weekly meditation group based on native tradition. The classes, taught by Ms. Cynthia Chandler, consisted of introduction to Native American spirituality, sacred teachings of the medicine wheel, prayer pipe ceremony, and talking stick ceremony. She also presented a workshop on these themes at a women's spirituality retreat sponsored by MCC Amarillo, TX.

Ms. Gina Hartung wore vestments combining Native American and MCC symbols on Ash Wednesday 1992.

▼ MCC Austin, TX, included a "smudge" blessing in the service to dedicate its new building in June, and offered a Lenten series based on the connections between Native American and Christian traditions this year.

Caution may be called for when different spiritual traditions meet. Rev. Larry Uhrig, pastor of MCC Washington DC, is one of those who expressed the need for careful thought before incorporating Native American traditions in MCC worship.

"I wouldn't incorporate anything in worship that doesn't in some clear way further the goal of preaching the Gospel," he said. "You run the risk of alienating people if they're not clear about what you're doing. In some geographical or cultural settings, using imagery or symbols of Native American culture might fit far more than in other places."

Rev. Uhrig draws a distinction between learning about different spiritual traditions and incorporating their rituals in worship. "It's important to be open and knowledgeable about diversity," he said. For

(see Native American Spirituality, page 3)

Keeping in Touch is a monthly publication of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. We are a church of the lesbian and gay community, open to all. Our mission is to call people to new life through the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ, confront injustice through Christian social action, and create a community of healing and reconciliation.

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Send address changes, news and ideas to: *Keeping in Touch*, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd, #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029; (213) 464-5100.

Editorial Board:
Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry, Moderator
Mr. Ravi Verma, Director of Administration
Rev. Kittredge Cherry, Editor

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Ms. Nancy Fackrell, Typesetting

Churches Explore Native American Spirituality

(continued from page 2)

example, he has used illustrations from Native American culture in his sermons.

"Native Americans had a structure in their spirituality to accommodate sexual diversity, and I think we should learn from that. The other aspect of Native American culture that speaks to us is their reverence for life and harmony between people and nature, and I think that essentially is harmonious with Christianity," he said.

Ms. Majel also searches for the harmony between Christianity and the spiritual traditions of her people. "We're just beginning to bridge over how we celebrate our spirituality," Ms. Majel explained. "What I've essentially done is bring with me to MCC all my culture and native beliefs fully intact. I spend a great deal of time translating and seeing the common ground: a Creator, a Great Spirit."

She joined MCC several years ago after attending a talent show at MCC San Diego. "I just saw the spirit of the people in the raw. It was captivating! It reminded me of my people and the attempt to maintain community against all odds," she said. "MCC was the first opportunity I got to see a non-Indian world work from a tribal perspective, meaning a community perspective."

In addition to her membership in MCC, Ms. Majel also fulfills the sacred responsibility of pipe carrier of the Ojibwe people and teaches American Indian studies at a community college in San Diego County.

She offers this wisdom for anyone interested in Native American spirituality: "What people are not aware of is that, as in any spiritual walk, it's a daily process. It's always being thankful. If you were to capture the essence of American Indian spirituality, it would be thankfulness to the earth. We believe the Creator is always there, everywhere in everything."

Ms. Hartung comes to Native American spirituality from a different perspective. Ms. Hartung, who is 1/32 Choctaw, joined MCC in 1988 after four years of practicing Native American spirituality. She was introduced to native traditions by her first lover, who was Native American.

"It was hard for me at first when I came into MCC, as I thought I would have to choose between Native American and Christian," Ms. Hartung explained. "At one point I was willing to leave MCC if it meant choosing, but the Great Spirit in infinite wisdom opened my eyes, and placed me where I can blend both. I am grateful for a Fellowship that is sensitive to all ways, and is willing to grow along those lines." ❐

Pentecost Celebrated in 17 Languages

Pentecost services at MCC Toronto, Canada, included Scripture readings in 17 languages including the original Greek, Italian, Cantonese, Polish, Japanese and Esperanto. Many congregants dressed according to their native tradition and an international potluck featured foods from many lands and regions of Canada, in what Rev. Brent Hawkes, pastor, called "the start of a new tradition at MCC Toronto."

Featured morning guests were Mary Woo and Bill Dwyer, senior employees of the Government of Metropolitan Toronto, which earlier in the week, approved, after lengthy debate, protection and benefits for same gender couples on staff. Ms. Woo and Mr. Dwyer had filed complaints with the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Ms. Woo is the municipality's Director of Employment Equity. They both thanked MCC'ers for their lobbying of council members before the vote, saying that they helped sway five votes with their telephone campaign. ❐

British MCC's Invited

Two British churches, MCC Bournemouth and MCC in East London have, somehow, been invited to join the Evangelical Alliance (EA) in the United Kingdom. EA is an inter-denominational group of individuals and churches who subscribe to evangelical teaching. "Either they have not realized who we are or they genuinely want an input from MCC," said Rev. Neil Thomas, pastor of MCC Bournemouth. ❐

FOR Fund Awards Scholarships

This year the Fund For Overcoming Racism has awarded four scholarships for Orientation to MCC Pastoring. The Fund For Overcoming Racism, or the FOR Fund, was founded in 1990 by the Board of Elders, to provide financial aid to ethnic/racial minority persons to attend Samaritan College's "Orientation to MCC Pastoring."

The following recipients received scholarships of $510.00 towards registration expenses:

Herbert E. Evans
MCC Long Beach, Long Beach, CA

Jose Marcos Gonzalez
MCC Los Angeles, Culver City, CA

Venson Phillip Mathews
Cathedral of Hope MCC, Dallas, TX

Lougenda Moore Tomlin
MCC Charlotte, Charlotte, NC

Due to the generous offering received at General Conference in June of 1991, funds were available to grant these scholarships. The FOR Fund is the only self sustaining scholarship fund available to the Fellowship. Your gifts are needed to continue the work of the Fund For Overcoming Racism. With your financial gift, the FOR Fund will be able to provide for others who have a calling to MCC pastoring, yet may be limited only by their financial situation and not their spirit.

The scholarships are available to all ethnic/racial minorities in the Fellowship worldwide. The funds need not be solely for tuition expense. To obtain an application write: FOR Fund Trustees, c/o UFMCC, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029. Your gifts may also be sent to the above address. ❐

District Conference Round-Up

Photo by Mr. Steve Warren

Sharing smiles at the Northwest District Conference are Elder Larry Rodriguez, right, and Mr. Terry Snowden of MCC Portland, OR. Mr. Snowden directed the conference choir.

Northwest District Holds Rally

The Northwest District rallied against homophobia and debated diversity at its district conference May 15-17 in Salem, OR.

The district also elected Rev. Tom Bigelow as its next district coordinator. (See *Keeping in Touch*, June 1992).

The conference was held in Oregon's capital the weekend before the primary election, so the conference held a rally on the Capitol steps against the homophobic campaign of the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA).

"The OCA is a radical right-wing group that passes itself off as being connected with conservative Christianity. They have as much to do with Christianity as my dog has to do with cats," said Rev. Gary Wilson, pastor of MCC Portland, OR, in opening the rally.

OCA is trying to qualify an initiative for the statewide ballot in November in Oregon and Colorado. It would forbid use of government funds to promote homosexuality and exclude sexual preference from any kind of protected status under law.

A forum on diversity allowed the expression of many viewpoints and concluded with the tabling of a resolution that would permit imaging God "as feminine spirit, masculine spirit or genderless spirit". ❐

Southwest District Sets Record

The Southwest District experienced its highest registration ever for a district conference with 184 registrants at the conference held May 15-17 in Las Vegas, NV, according to Rev. Don Pederson, district coordinator.

More than 300 people attended Sunday worship at the conference. A special offering of $514 was collected for relief efforts in south central Los Angeles, CA, in the wake of the recent riots.❐

South Central District Flies Flags

The South Central District's annual conference opened April 30 in Dallas, TX, with a processional of large flags from every country where UFMCC exists, said Mr. Clarke Friesen, district coordinator.

The diversity of UFMCC was also manifest in a powerful communion liturgy that was sung in Spanish (without translation!)

In addition to conducting business, the conference heard inspirational messages from Rev. Jon Haack, Mr. Jimmy Allen, Rev. Shelley Hamilton, Dr. Bev Teagle, Rev. Elder Jean White and Rev. Elder John Gill. ❐

Great Lakes District Honors Its Own

The Great Lakes District's Spring Conference was hosted by MCC Detroit, MI, May 15-17. Many churches and individuals were recognized for their achievements, said Ms. Judy Dale, district coordinator.

Commissioned and chartered churches with the greatest growth in 1991 were New Spirit MCC, Cincinnati, OH (51 percent); New Hope MCC, Milwaukee, WI (35 percent); and Good Samaritan Parish MCC, Toledo, OH (30 percent).

Rev. Gordon McCoy was named Clergyperson of the Year and Ms. Shirley Hayward was named Layperson of the Year. Divine Peace MCC, Hazel Park, MI, was honored for having the highest percentage of membership pre-registered at 56 percent. ❐

Gulf Lower Atlantic District Makes Mark on Mississippi

The Gulf Lower Atlantic District Conference, held May 1-3 in Jackson, MS, was the largest public gathering of the lesbian and gay community ever held in Mississippi.

Registration reached 200, with 300 people attending the Saturday night worship service. This was also the first MCC conference to be held in Mississippi.

Riots in Los Angeles, CA, forced Rev. Elder Troy Perry to cancel his plans to speak at the conference, but the district turned this crisis into an opportunity for blessing by passing a statement against racism, said Rev. Jay Neely, district coordinator. Part of the statement read, "The recent violent reaction to the systemic racism and classism in America evidenced by the Rodney King decision calls attention to the depths of sin that threaten our world." Many district leaders stepped in at the last minute to serve as preachers. Speakers included Rev. Marge Ragona and Deacon J.R. Finney of First MCC of Atlanta, GA; Ms. Nancy Brown, MCC Hickory, NC; Mr. Mick Hinson, MCC Greenville, SC; and Mr. Wayne Lindsey, St. John's MCC, Raleigh, NC.

Covenant MCC, Birmingham, AL, was recognized for the highest per-capita attendance at the conference. ❐

Register by July 25: SAVE $

The 1992 UFMCC Church Leadership Conference with Lyle E. Schaller

August 25-27, 1992

Building up the Body of Christ: Strategies and Styles for Successful Evangelism and Church Growth

▼ **Hear today's "foremost authority on the dynamics of church life" discuss:**

~ CONTEMPORARY TRENDS AFFECTING CONGREGATIONAL LIFE -- Plenary 1
~ THE "NICHE CHURCH" HAS REPLACED THE GEOGRAPHICAL CHURCH -- Plenary 2
~ PITFALLS IN THE ROAD AHEAD OF US -- Plenary 3
~ THE POST 1969 GENERATION: A NEW AND DIFFERENT GENERATION -- Plenary 4
~ WHO IS YOUR COMPETITION? TODAY? TOMORROW? -- Plenary 5

▼ **Explore the experience of growing MCC churches through a Church Growth Roundtable.**

Dialogue with a panel of Pastors of MCC congregations with records of substantial growth.

~ IN SMALLER CHURCHES

Rev. Jim Burns, MCC - New Haven, CT; Rev. Colleen Darraugh, MCC - Denton, TX; Rev. John Jacobs, Church of Our Savior MCC - Boca Raton, FL; Rev. Steven Torrence, MCC - Key West, FL

~ IN MEDIUM CHURCHES

Rev. Wendy Foxworth, MCC - Austin, TX; Rev. Brenda Hunt, Agape MCC - Fort Worth, TX; Rev. Jim Mitulski, MCC - San Francisco, CA; Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, MCC - Los Angeles, CA

~ IN LARGER CHURCHES

Rev. Michael Piazza, Cathedral of Hope MCC - Dallas, TX; Rev. Brent Hawkes, MCC - Toronto, Ontario; Rev. Grant Ford, Sunshine Cathedral MCC - Fort Lauderdale, FL; Rev. Arlene Ackerman, Mid-Atlantic District Coordinator.

▼ **Discover the newest model of church growth, the Meta-Church, and "side door evangelism."**

~ Rev. Lou Kavar will introduce this exciting approach which centers on celebrative worship and effective cell groups

▼ **Encounter effective methods of outreach in two Evangelism Roundtable presentations which are vital to every MCC congregation:**

~ EVANGELISM ROUNDTABLE ON AIDS MINISTRY

Presenting a case study on church growth in the midst of HIV/AIDS; Rev. Ron Jesser, Christ Chapel MCC - Santa Ana, CA

~ EVANGELISM ROUNDTABLE ON BUILDING THE MULTICULTURAL CHURCH

Presenting a case study on church growth rich in racial, ethnic and cultural diversity; Deacon Nathan Meckley, MCC - Los Angeles, CA

Church Leadership Conference
Workshops and Schedule

Workshops:

Concurrent workshops are designed for churches of various sizes defined as follows:

A.	Small Churches:	Under 50 active participants
B.	Medium Churches:	50 - 150 active participants
C.	Large Churches:	Over 150 active participants

FOR SMALLER CHURCHES

A1. Focus on the Smaller Church with Lyle Schaller
A2. The Meta-Church Model for Smaller Churches
A3. Church Growth Roundtable for Smaller Churches

FOR MEDIUM CHURCHES

B1. Focus on the Medium-Sized Church with Lyle Schaller
B2. The Meta-Church Model for Medium-Sized Churches
B3. Church Growth Roundtable for Medium-Sized Churches

FOR LARGER CHURCHES

C1. Focus on the Larger Church with Lyle Schaller
C2. The Meta-Church Model for Larger Churches
C3. Church Growth Roundtable for Larger Churches

SCHEDULE:

Tuesday, August 25

11:00 am - 12:30 pm - *Opening Brunch*
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm - *Plenary 1 with Lyle Schaller*
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm - *Workshops A1, B2, C3*
4:15 pm - 5:15 pm - *Workshops B1, C2, A3*
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm - *Worship Service*

Wednesday, August 26

8:30 am - 9:30 am - *Worship Service*
10:00 am - 11:30 am - *Plenary 2 with Lyle Schaller*
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm - *Luncheon*
1:30 pm - 3:00 pm - *Plenary 3 with Lyle Schaller*
3:30 pm - 5:00 pm - *Plenary 4 with Lyle Schaller*
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm - *Evangelism Roundtable on AIDS Ministry*
8:15 pm - 9:15 pm - *Evangelism Roundtable on Building the Multicultural Church*

Thursday, August 27

8:30 am - 9:30 am - *Workshops C1, A2, B3*
10:00 am - 11:30 am - *Plenary 5 with Lyle Schaller*
12:00 noon - 1:30 pm - *Closing Luncheon*
Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry, Speaking

(Worship and Music coordinated by Rev. Grant Lynn Ford and Greg Jones, Sunshine Cathedral MCC, Ft. Lauderdale, FL)

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

MID-SIZE CHURCH GROUP MEETING

Tuesday, August 25, 9:30 pm; as announced thereafter
Facilitated by: Rev. John Jacobs

CLERGY CONCERNS WORKSHOP

Thursday, August 27, 3:00 - 5:00 pm
Facilitated by: Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson and the CCCC

The 1992 UFMCC People of Color Conference with Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly

August 28 - 30, 1992

From Generation to Generation...
Transforming Leadership of People of Color Throughout History

PROGRAM:

▼ Who Should Attend?

This conference is designed for People of Color and White People! Opportunities will be provided for networking and leadership training. Participants will learn new skills for creating effective outreach in communities of color and overcoming racism.

▼ Featured Guest

Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly is the first African-American woman to be elected Bishop in a major Christian denomination in the U.S.A. From 1984 to 1988 she served as Bishop of the California-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church. Upon her retirement in 1988, she became Visiting Professor of Homiletics at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. From 1988 to 1990, Bishop Kelly served as the first President of the AIDS National Interfaith Network in the U.S.A.

▼ Plenary Speakers

Paul Akio Kawata is Executive Director of the National Minority AIDS Council (U.S.A.), having served as the Executive Director of the National AIDS Network (U.S.A.) from 1985 to 1989. From 1982 to 1985, he served on the Mayor's staff in Seattle, Washington.

Juanita Majel is a counselor and storyteller, and a professor of philosophy and religion in the Department of American Indian Studies at Palomar College in Southern California.

SCHEDULE:

Friday, August 28

9:00 am-10:00 am	Breakfast - Rev. Elder Troy Perry, Speaking
10:15 am-11:15 am	Worship Service - Rev. Charlotte Strayhorn, preaching
11:30 am-12:30 pm	Plenary with Paul Kawata, Exec. Director, National Minority AIDS Council U.S.A. **"Burning Buildings and Defying the Law"**
12:30 pm-1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm-3:00 pm	Workshops:

A. **"Can People of Color effectively Minister in UFMCC?"**
To engage this question, a panel will discuss and identify racial barriers to effective ministry. It will further ask which gifts and skills work toward effective ministry through racial barriers. For People of Color.

B. **"Aids in Minority Countries"** by Mr. Paul Kawata, Executive Director
Information from the 1992 World AIDS Conference will be presented. It will include current epidemology and future projections. The attitude of various countries and what is being done in the areas of diagnosis, education and treatment will be discussed. For All People.

C. **"Turning Ideas Into Action"** by Mr. Clarke Friesen
This workshop will focus on transforming spiritual connections and good intentions into practical ideas. Participants will examine ways of intentionally empowering white people and people of color to build a multi-racial/cultural church universal. For White People.

Department of People of Color Conference

Schedule:

Friday, August 28 (Cont'd)

3:30 pm-4:30 pm — Plenary with Ms. Juanita Majel
"Bridging Perspectives: Native American Spirituality and Western Ideology"

4:30 pm-7:30 pm — Dinner on own

7:30 pm-9:00 pm — Workshops:

A. **"Creating A Vision For the 90's and Beyond"**
Defining goals for DPOC Divisions of Education, Evangelism, and AIDS Ministry. This workshop will transform our dreams for DPOC's Divisions into achievable goals. Participants will join one of three focus groups to help chart the future of the Divisions. Each focus group will develop an all important Statement of Purpose and will establish goals for the next two years and long-range goals for the next six years. For People of Color.

B. **"White People Healing Racism 101"** by Ms. Jean Strickland
This workshop is designed to explore the makeup of racism, definitions of racism, forms racism takes and how white people are involved. It is a process by which white people can examine their involvement in and their feelings around racism whether they be fear, anger, sorrow or guilt. It will assist participants in beginning their process toward healing by empowering them to take action to eradicate racism. For White People.

Saturday, August 29

8:00 am-9:00 am — **"Somewhere Inside The Rainbow"**
Connecting with Affinity Groups: (Black, Hispanic, Asian, and others)
In the UFMCC "Rainbow," where do we as people of many colors and backgrounds fit in? Here's your chance to connect with those who share your unique qualities. Discuss the commonalities that draw you together. Celebrate your strengths. Identify challenges and obstacles. Then develop a list of shared goals which affirm and empower your affinity group.
For People of Color

9:15 am-10:15 am — Worship Service: Ms. Juanita Majel, preaching

10:30 am-12:00 noon — Workshops:

A. **"What is the Agenda for People of Color in UFMCC?"** Elder Larry Rodriguez
Finding Unity in Diveristy. Drawing on the results of the Division Workshops and the Affinity Group Meetings, this session promises to synthesize a common agenda for all people of color within the UFMCC. What special gifts do we bring to the UFMCC thanks to our rich and varied experiences? What issues demand a call for prompt action and what challenges suggest gradual change? For People of Color.

B. **"A White Feminist Struggles With Race and Class"** Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson
This session will address the issues of "inclusive community" and "inclusive worship" from a multi-cultural rather than a mono-cultural point of view. Can we deal with sexism, racism and classism together in an MCC context? For White People.

C. **"Building a Rainbow Denomination"** Rev Jim Downing & Rev Pat Bumgardner
By striving to be an inclusive church, many MCC's find within their congregations wide diversity of racial and ethnic backgrounds. A panel of facilitators will share successes and challenges from their own churches.
Open to All.

12:00-1:30 pm — Lunch - Bishop Kelly, speaking

2:00 pm-3:00 pm — **Plenary with Bishop Kelly**, United Methodist Church

3:15 pm-5:15 pm — Business Meetings

7:30 pm-9:00 pm — Worship Service: Rev. Elder Jean White, preaching

Sunday, August 30

10:30 am-12:00 noon — Worship Service: Mr. Jose Marcos, preaching

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION
HOTEL AND TRAVEL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION

Name_____ Telephone _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Please indicate special needs:

❑ Wheelchair-accessible room ❑ Sign language interpretation ❑ Vegetarian meals

❑ Other: _____

I wish to register for:

❑ 1992 UFMCC Church Leadership Conference
August 25-27, 1992

❑ Late Registration (Postmarked no later than July 25, 1992)	$150.00 (U.S.)
❑ On site Registration	$175.00 (U.S.)
❑ Outside the U.S.A.	$ 80.00 (U.S.)

❑ 1992 UFMCC People of Color Conference
August 28-30, 1992

❑ Late Registration (Postmarked no later than July 25, 1992)	$125.00 (U.S.)
❑ On site Registration	$150.00 (U.S.)
❑ Outside the U.S.A.	$ 60.00 (U.S.)

Enjoy both Conferences. . .Save Money!

❑ I wish to register for *both* the 1992 UFMCC Church Leadership Conference and People of Color Conference -- August 25-30, 1992

❑ Late Registration (Postmarked no later than July 25, 1992)	$250.00 (U.S.)
❑ On site Registration	$300.00 (U.S.)
❑ Outside the U.S.A.	$115.00 (U.S.)

Hotel & Travel Information

Both Conferences will meet at the beautiful Pointe at Tapatio Cliffs in Phoenix, Arizona.

Hotel rates for these conferences are $65.00 per night plus taxes for a single, double, triple, or quad room. In lieu of tips, there is an additional $2.00 per room per night housekeeping charge, and a $3.00 per person porterage charge added to each room upon check-in and check-out.

Choose the designated airline for these conferences, American Airlines, and save 5% off the lowest applicable round-trip fare. Substantial savings are also available on full-coach and first-class fares. To receive these fares, reservations must be made through Vacation Corporation Travel, (800) 966-7174; outside the U.S.A. call collect to (213) 933-4111. Hotel reservations can also be arranged through Vacation Corporation or direct with The Pointe at (800) 528-0428 or (602) 997-6000.

For additional information, please contact UFMCC by calling (213) 464-5100

District Conference Round-Up

Northeast District Holds A First Class Retreat

On the first weekend of May, 75 Northeast District MCC'ers gathered in Litchfield, CT for the District's largest and most ambitious retreat weekend ever, said Rev. Jeff Pulling, district coordinator. "Gay and Lesbian Spirituality" was the theme of the weekend, and that theme was tantalizingly explored by the two guest resource persons: Dr. John McNeill and the Rev. Nancy Wilson. Dr. McNeill, a former Jesuit priest, ministers among gay and lesbian persons as a psychotherapist, lecturer, and retreat leader. He is the author of the books *The Church and the Homosexual* and *Taking a Chance on God.* Rev. Wilson, an Elder of the UFMCC for 16 years, is the pastor of MCC Los Angeles, CA, and the co-editor of the book *Amazing Grace: Stories of Gay and Lesbian Faith.*

Other highlights of the retreat weekend were four worship services: Evening Prayer, Morning Communion, Evening Service of Healing, and Sunday Worship; music coordination by Mr. Clyde Proch of Hartford, CT; special musical offerings by Ms. Randa McNamara of Brooklyn, NY, and by Mr. David Heid and Ms. Jane Syftestad of New York City, NY; and Saturday afternoon free time excursions to nearby White Flower Farm and Haight Winery.

The retreat site was the Wisdom House in Litchfield, CT, which is in the scenic and rural northwest corner of the state. Wisdom House is owned and operated by an order of sisters, the Daughters of Wisdom, who view God as Wisdom/Sophia and who welcome all who seek Wisdom. ❐

Dr. John McNeill addresses the Northeast District Retreat.

Eastern Canadians Discuss "Isms"

About 45 people attended the first Eastern Canadian District Retreat May 15-18 near Toronto, Ontario.

"It was quite miraculous in many ways," said Ms. Lydia Segal, district coordinator. The theme of the three-day retreat was "Imanism," an abbreviation for "I am an ism." The program featured discussion of six "isms": racism, heterosexism, sexism, healthism, ageism, and classism.

"Every worship service was like a beautiful bouquet of flowers that somebody offered the congregation," Ms. Segal added. Saturday morning worship was held in silence, with Bible passages written on a chart and a sign-language rendition of "Jesus Loves Me." The retreat also included a new version of the "Stations of the Cross."

Ms. Segal commended Safe Harbour Community Church of Halifax, Nova Scotia, the district's newest work, for sending eight people to the retreat.❐

General Conference in Australia?

General Council has voted to recommend that the 1997 General Conference be in Australia and has mandated the International Concerns, Research and Development (ICRD) Division to begin designing a comprehensive, strategic plan to fulfill this goal. They are presenting questions and answers about General Conference in Australia as a regular feature in *Keeping in Touch* over the next few months. If you have any comments or questions about issues not addressed here, please contact ICRD through the Fellowship office by Aug. 31.

What language is spoken in Australia?

The primary language of Australia is English. However, if someone does not speak English there is easy telephone contact with official interpreter services.

What will the weather be like?

It is winter in Australia but the Sydney climate is mild and relatively dry. (15-22 degrees Celsius; 50-70 degrees Fahrenheit).

What kind of clothing will I need?

Whatever you wear on a daily basis. Most dress in Australia would be casual with a light jacket for the evenings. ❐

EXCEL International Meets

EXCEL International, a lay ministry of UFMCC, held its All Team Gathering in Washington, DC, June 19-21.

"We wanted to give people a chance to pray and play," said Ms. Margie Clements, director of the Capitol Excel Team, which hosted the gathering.

The gathering is held every year so that Excel teams from throughout UFMCC can meet, share ideas, present workshops and conduct business. ❐

MCC Broadcasts God's Love

"I want to spread the message of God's love to the world," said Rev. Brenda Hunt, senior pastor of Agape MCC of Fort Worth, TX, after she finished video-taping two segments of the *American Religious Town Hall* television program in Dallas, TX.

American Religious Town Hall is a TV talk show that examines a wide variety of social and theological issues in religion today. A panel of several ministers of different faiths is moderated by Pastor Robert Leiske, a Seventh-Day Adventist.

This program featuring Rev. Hunt will be broadcast on 140 TV stations around the United States. ❐

UFMCC Founder Attends Rally

Rev. Elder Troy Perry, founder and moderator of UFMCC, attended a rally May 18 where Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton appealed for support from the gay and lesbian community.

The rally, held in Hollywood, CA, was widely reported by U.S. news media as the first time that the nominee of a major political party openly courted gay and lesbian votes.

This photo, which clearly shows Rev. Perry greeting Mr. Clinton, appeared in many of the most influential U.S. publications, including *The New York Times, Newsweek,* and *USA Today.*

"I have a vision and you're part of it," Mr. Clinton told the crowd of about 500 people, most of them gay men. He spoke for 25 minutes before a dozen cameras and issued a three-page position paper on gay/lesbian and AIDS issues. More details are available in the July 1992 issue of ALERT, UFMCC's monthly newsletter on AIDS issues. ❐

Rev. Perry attends rally for presidential candidate Bill Clinton. AP/Wide World Photos

Ecumenical Plans Made

(continued from page 1)

to dismiss the NCC-UFMCC Dialogue Committee, effective in November 1992. UFMCC representatives on the committee are Rev. Wilson and Rev. Kittredge Cherry, field director of ecumenical witness and ministry. The committee's work was the most recent in a series of study processes on gay and lesbian concerns that the NCC has undertaken with UFMCC since UFMCC applied for membership in 1981.

"We are angry but not surprised at the dismissal of our committee, and I vow that we will not go away," said Rev. Wilson. "UFMCC will continue to be present at every meeting of the NCC General Board." She explained that UFMCC applied for NCC membership 11 years ago with two goals:

"First, we came as a community of caring people to witness to the gay and lesbian spiritual awakening that is occuring in the Christian church at large, and to be a voice for lesbian and gay people as the churches struggle to deal with heterosexism," she said. UFMCC has successfully met this goal, she said, noting that NCC leaders now describe homosexuality as "the most divisive church issue since slavery."

"Second, we came seeking fellowship with the NCC as a Christian denomination that meets all its stated requirements for membership," she said. "We have again reached an impasse in our second purpose. Every time the Council agrees on a method to discuss the real reasons we have not been granted membership, there is a reneging on that commitment."

In 1982, the NCC Constituent Membership Committee voted unanimously that UFMCC meets all the membership requirements, but the final vote on eligibility was tabled indefinitely and has never been taken.

Rev. Wilson emphasized that the decision to dismiss the NCC-UFMCC Dialogue Committee stems from broad-based heterosexism. ❐

Positions Available

MCC Roseburg, OR, is searching for a pastor. For more information, contact Eunice Coy or Jim Hopper, c/o MCC Roseburg, P.O. Box 2125, Roseburg, OR 97470.

Hope MCC, Daytona Beach, FL, is accepting resumes for a part-time pastor. Resumes may be sent to: Pastoral Search, P.O. Box 15151, Daytona Beach, FL 32114.

MCC Richmond, VA, is seeking a full-time pastor. Applications may be sent to Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Stewart Ayers, 2725 Perdue Ave., Chester, VA 23831.

Job Opening: Part-time ($500 per month) Music Director for MCC Los Angeles. A job description is available; please call or write to: Rev. Nancy Wilson, 5879 Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232; (213) 930-1600.

Southeast District of UFMCC wishes to announce that the position of SED District Coordinator is open with election to be held at the SED Conference, Nov. 12-14 in Ft. Myers, FL. Interested persons should write to: Rev. James Lynch, c/o St. John the Apostle MCC, P.O. Box 2107, Ft. Myers, FL 33902, or call (813) 278-5181.

Several appointments to office will be made at the upcoming Board of Elders meetings. Persons interested in being considered for appointment to these positions are encouraged to send resumes to Elder Larry Rodriguez, Clerk of the Board of Elders, c/o UFMCC. Two program agencies have positions to be filled by appointment: the Clergy Credentials and Concerns Committee, and the FOR Fund Board of Trustees. In addition, two program agencies, EXCEL and the Department of People of Color, will be selecting people at their upcoming meetings to be considered as their nominees to fill various offices within their program by the Board of Elders.

At the 1992 UFMCC People of Color Conference which will be held in Phoenix, AZ, Aug. 28-30, 1992, the following positions on the Executive Committee will become vacant and need to be filled: Executive Director, Clerk, Treasurer, and two members at large. For an application contact: Mr. Ravi Verma, c/o UFMCC, (213) 464-5100. All documents due by August 1, 1992. ❐

Around The Fellowship

Praises

Russia's first Christopher Street Days celebrating lesbian and gay pride were held in St. Petersburg June 12-15, reports **Dr. Alex Babkin**. Dr. Babkin was in the first Russian delegation to visit the Fellowship offices in December 1991.

MCC Washington, DC, had a booth for the first time in Black Gay and Lesbian Pride Day. **Rev. Larry Uhrig** celebrates his 15th anniversary as pastor there on June 28.

Rev. Jim Glyer, 74, director of congregational care at **MCC San Francisco**, CA, celebrates 50 years of ministry July 25. In May he observed the 50th anniversary of his graduation from Union Theological Seminary in New York City, NY, and also the 50th anniversary of his ordination in the Presbyterian Church. In 1974, he left the Presbyterian Church over the issue of homosexuality and joined MCC, where he has served in Los Angeles, North Hollywood and San Francisco, CA; Portland, OR; Kansas City, MO.

The largest Track II class ever—with 40 students—attends **Samaritan College's Orientation to MCC Pastoring** in San Rafael, CA, this month.

One year after launching its $2 million bond drive, **Cathedral of Hope MCC**, Dallas, TX, has sold all of its bonds. **Rev. Michael Piazza**, pastor, reports that $1.8 million were sold within the congregation, with no single person buying more than $60,000 worth. More than 300 members purchased the bonds.

Trinity MCC, Arlington, TX, recently purchased four acres of land and building plans are underway. **Rev. Jo Crisco** is pastor.

Two new churches have opened in the **Gulf Lower Atlantic District: MCC Savannah**, GA, and **MCC Asheville**, NC.

MCC Seattle, WA, celebrates its 20th anniversary Charter Sunday Aug. 9. On the same day, the church will install **Ms. Cheri Starchman** as lay pastor. She is preparing for licensing in 1993 and was recently appointed to a one-year Board position on the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

Rev. Steve Pieters, UFMCC's field director of AIDS Ministry, is one of 131 outstanding individuals from across the United States who have been nominated for the U.S. National Pathfinders Award in recognition of their unique and vital contributions to the national fight against AIDS. ❐

Prayers

Mr. Eric Steele, former student clergy at **Exodus MCC** of Abilene, TX, died in San Antonio, TX, on April 16. The graveside service was April 20.

Rev. Steve Torrence, pastor of **MCC Key West**, FL, is recovering well from gall bladder surgery May 26. ❐

Transitions

Rev. Roy Lenington was elected pastor of **MCC Quad Cities**, Rock Island, IL. He began his duties there June 1.

MCC Greenville, SC, has called Student Clergy **Mick Hinson**, former pastoral leader of MCC Augusta, GA, as its new pastor.

Rev. Justo Gonzalez was approved as the pastoral leader of **Emmanuel MCC**, Cleveland, OH. He is working on a master's degree at Case Western Reserve and has pastored an independent Hispanic Pentecostal church in Rochester, NY.

The following pastoral resignations have taken effect recently: **Ms. Jody Ahlstedt, MCC Roseburg**, OR; **Rev. Lisetta Thomas, River City Living MCC**, San Antonio, TX; **Rev. Stephen Fund, All Saints MCC**, Atlanta, GA; **Rev. Arthur C. Runyan II, MCC Richmond**, VA. ❐

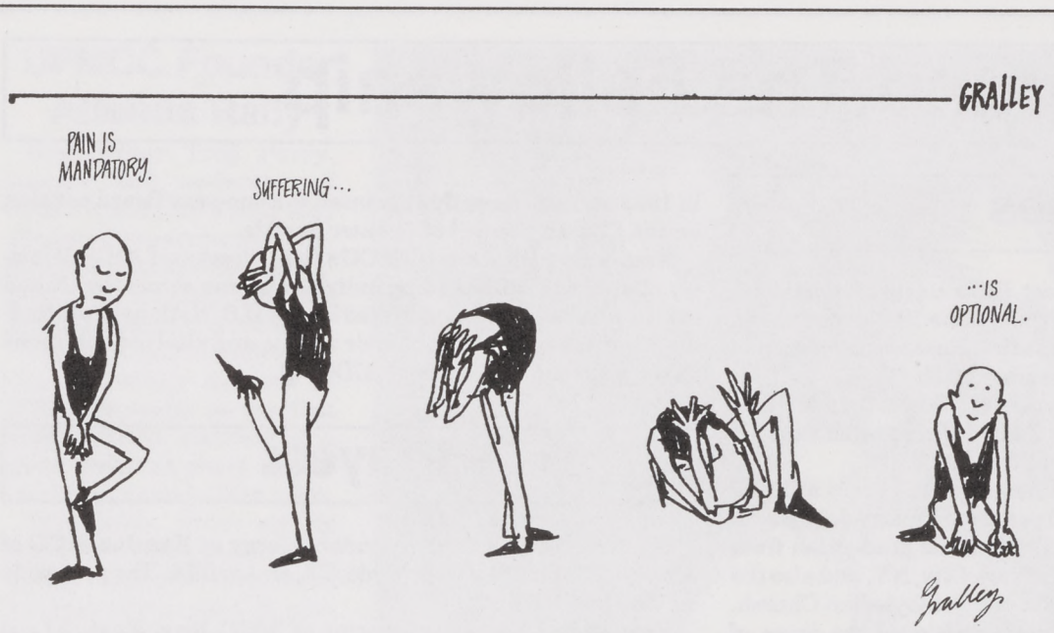
Top 20 Tithes - May 1992

1.	MCC Dallas, Dallas, TX	US $	3,592.31
2.	Church/Holy Spirit MCC, Ft Lauderdale, FL		2,814.93
3.	MCC Toronto, Ontario, Canada	CAN$	2,669.67
4.	MCC Washington, Washington, DC		2,329.33
5.	MCC of the Resurrection, Houston, TX		2,317.44
6.	MCC San Francisco, San Francisco, CA		1,877.31
7.	MCC Long Beach, Long Beach, CA		1,857.21
8.	First MCC of Kansas, Wichita, KS		1,649.48
9.	MCC of the Rockies, Denver, CO		1,229.02
10.	King of Peace MCC, St. Petersburg, FL		1,192.41
11.	Agape' MCC, Ft. Worth, TX		1,139.60
12.	MCC New York, New York City, NY		1,012.67
13.	All God's Children MCC, Minneapolis, MN		899.46
14.	Church of Our Savior MCC, Boca Raton, FL		850.20
15.	Church of the Trinity MCC, Sarasota, FL		785.42
16.	New Life MCC of Tidewater, Norfolk, VA		767.14
17.	River City Living MCC, San Antonio, TX		705.73
18.	First MCC of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA		679.49
19.	MCC Albuquerque, Albuquerque, NM		640.68
20.	Christ Chapel MCC, Santa Ana, CA		627.95

{These figures reflect the 10 percent of each local church's income that is reported to Fellowship headquarters by the 10th of the following month}

Top 20 Per Capita - May 1992

1.	River City Living MCC, San Antonio, TX	US$	53.46
2.	Maranatha MCC, San Lorenzo, CA		37.53
3.	New Life MCC, Berkeley, CA		32.74
4.	Church of the Resurrection MCC, Chicago, IL		32.11
5.	Calvary MCC, Redwood City, CA		30.56
6.	Pikes Peak MCC, Colorado Springs, CO		30.07
7.	MCC Santa Barbara County, Santa Barbara, CA		30.05
8.	MCC of the Disciples, Washington, DC		27.50
9.	Faith Eternal MCC, Springfield, MO		27.26
10.	Eternal Light MCC, Olympia, WA		27.08
11.	MCC Hickory, Hickory, NC		26.45
12.	MCC Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany	DM	26.14
13.	Church With A Vision MCC, Longview, TX		24.99
14.	MCC of the Gentle Shepherd, Vancouver, WA		23.87
15.	MCC Rockville, Rockville, MD		23.16
16.	MCC of the Living Faith, St. Louis, MO		22.54
17.	MCC of Northern Virginia, Falls Church, VA		22.17
18.	MCC Hartford, Hartford, CT		21.78
19.	Christ the Redeemer MCC, Evanston, IL		21.66
20.	MCC Silverlake, Los Angeles, CA		21.20



Faith, Fellowship and Order to Meet

UFMCC's Commission on Faith, Fellowship and Order (FFO) will hold its conference Aug. 20-24 at the Pointe in Phoenix, AZ.

The FFO Steering Committee will meet Aug. 20. The conference will feature working group meetings and worship. FFO's three working groups are addressing the following areas: mission statement and ethics, theology of ordination, and FFO workshops and notebook revisions.

For more information, contact Rev. Steve Torrence, FFO Chair, MCC Key West, 1215 Petronia St., Key West, FL 33040; (305) 294-0982. ❐

Medical Mission Planned for Nigeria

The Board of World Church Extension (WCE) has announced a special medical mission to the MCC clinic in Nigeria. Under the direction of the Rev. Elder Jean White, executive secretary of WCE, three medical professionals from the U.S. will visit the hospital in September.

The medical needs of our sisters and brothers in Nigeria are staggering. Facing high rates of illness and ranging from infant mortality to HIV/AIDS, the seven MCC congregations in Nigeria have stretched their limited resources in order to provide medical care. To help meet their health care needs, Dr. Doug Cable and Mr. Matt Jones of MCC Ocean of Life, Costa Mesa, CA, and Ms. Pattie Hewbanks of Agape MCC of Fort Worth, TX, will accompany Elder White on the medical mission in September.

While MCC Ocean of Life and Agape MCC are raising the funds for their members to travel to Nigeria, funds are still needed for medical supplies and other expenses. Your support for this mission is urgently requested. Your contribution may be sent to the Offices of UFMCC, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029. ❐

Churches Stand For Justice

Special activities to promote justice in June are occuring in two different regions.

Members of MCC Mongomery, AL, and their newly elected interim pastor, Rev. Felicia Fontaine, took part in a demonstration at Auburn University June 13. The purpose was to support the Gay and Lesbian Student Union, which has been opposed by Alabama state legislators. The student group reached out to the Gulf Lower Atlantic District for help in responding to religious condemnation. The district has also received a request from Appalachian State Universary in Boone, NC, where a similar group is facing community opposition.

Rev. Marguerite Scroggie, pastor of MCC Eugene, OR, is participating in "For Love and Justice—A Walk Against Hate." Beginning June 7, participants spent two weeks walking through rural Oregon. They arrived in Portland June 20 for the Gay Pride March and Rally. "Like the Rev. Martin Luther King's historic walk in Alabama to underscore the need for justice for people of color, we will be walking for justice for all sexual orientations," Rev. Scroggie reports. ❐

Southwest District Plans Retreat for Women

The first Southwest District "Womyn's Spirituality Retreat" will be held Sept. 25-27 at Camp Fox near San Diego, CA.

Women from all districts are invited to "celebrate UFMCC womyns-worth" at the retreat. The $75 registration fee includes meals and housing.

For more information, contact Rev. Sheila Rawls, SWDWR Director, P.O. Box 746, Spring Valley, CA 91976. Information is also available from Rev. Jane Carl, Ocean of Life MCC, Costa Mesa, CA; Ms. Debbie Root, Oasis MCC, Phoenix, AZ; and Rev. Judy Dahl, MCC Ventura, CA. ❐

Australians Embrace Leather Pride

Rev. Greg Smith, Australian District Coordinator, conducted an AIDS memorial service in May at Sydney, Australia's first Leather Pride Week. The week also featured a blessing of motorbikes by Rev. Smith.

Rev. Smith also kept score as tallymaster at the Australian national Mr. Drummer contest in Sydney.

On April 24, Rev. Smith appeared on the front page of *The Daily Liberal*, the regional newspaper for western New South Wales, under the headline, "Gay Minister Undeterred by Bible Bashers." ❐